

MONGOLIAN STATE ALUMNI MAGAZINE

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A Message from the Public Affairs Officer

Greetings Alumni! I am thrilled to have recently arrived in Mongolia as the new Public Affairs Officer at the U.S. Embassy and to be writing my first message for the Mongolian State Alumni Magazine.

As you know, the State Department recently solicited ideas for possible funding from the Alumni Engagement Innovation Fund. It is an amazing accomplishment to have two Mongolian projects chosen from among more than 700 submissions as finalists in the grant competition. This is a testament to the good ideas and hard work coming from the Mongolian State Alumni community. When I stopped by the Alumni Office in DC, I was delighted to learn that one of those projects was chosen for funding. The project, "Orchard": Raising Employment and Business Opportunities for People with Disabilities in Mongolia, builds upon work you in the Mongolian Association of State Alumni have already done toward reaching your goal of "equal opportunity for everyone." This association goal is a noble one, and I am excited to watch this project as it moves towards fruition.

After the success of the first national alumni conference, held in January, MASA and the U.S. Embassy are embarking on another exciting alumni project – a regional State alumni conference that will be held this October in Mongolia. I'm glad that this conference will be one of my first big events as Public Affairs Officer. (You can read more details in this issue of the Mongolian State Alumni Magazine.)

Since 1989 more than 1000 Mongolians have participated in U.S. government sponsored programs, and each year we are pleased to add to this number by sending more of Mongolia's current and future leaders to the U.S. on programs such as Fulbright, Humphrey and International Visitors Leadership Program.

In my short time here, I have already met a number of our alumni, and you are an impressive group. You have already distinguished yourselves by the accomplishments that qualified you for these programs, and you continue to distinguish yourself as leaders and role models by taking time out of your busy professional lives to make a difference in your community and in your country. Over the months and years to come, I look forward to meeting many more of you, to learning about your experiences in U.S. Government programs, and to seeing how those experiences are affecting your lives and work here in Mongolia.

-Allyson Algeo

Alumni Regional Conference in Mongolia

The U.S. Embassy and the Mongolian Association of State Alumni (MASA) are happy to announce that the second East Asia and Pacific regional alumni association enrichment conference is scheduled to take place in Ulaanbaatar from October 8-10, 2011. This conference is being organized on the joint initiative of the Public Affairs section of the U.S. Embassy and MASA. The conference aims to foster regional collaboration between the alumni organizations in the EAP region and facilitate dialogue and exchange of ideas on such themes as alumni association development and best practices, youth alumni leadership and engagement, and regional collaboration on global issues. The first of this kind of conference in the region took place in Manila Philippines in 2007 and after four years the U.S. Embassy in Ulaanbaatar and MASA are happy to once again invite the EAP alumni community to discussion table and engage them in talks of regional collaboration and development.

Mongolian Association of State Alumni



Mongolian Association of State Alumni (MASA) was established in September 2007 as a community of all past and current Mongolian participants of U.S. Government sponsored exchange programs. Since 1989 more than 1000 Mongolians have participated in U.S. Government sponsored programs and you are a welcome member of this family.

MASA Mission

To contribute to the bilateral relationships of Mongolia and USA and promote the efforts of Mongolian U.S. Government alumni for the societal and community development.

D. Jargalsaikhan

Current president of the Mongolian Association of State Alumni (MASA)
CEO, XAC Leasing
USAID Masters' Program alumnus, 2002

If you would like to join MASA and learn more about its activities please visit: <http://www.masa.org.mn/>

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AEIF Update- Mongolia Becomes a Winner



Empowering Physically Disabled Mongolians in the Work Force:

As we all know, the State Alumni Office has announced the Alumni Engagement Innovation Fund (AEIF) to foster great ideas from within the State alumni community and more than 700 project ideas have been submitted for the first round from alumni throughout the world. From these 700 ideas, 137 were selected to compete for the second round and two projects that were submitted from Mongolia have both been included in the finalists' list. Out of this 137 finalists, only 38 projects throughout the world were granted funding and the "Empowering Physically Challenged Mongolians in the Work Force," a project submitted by MASA aimed at raising Employment and Business opportunities for People with Disabilities in Mongolia became one of the seven projects to receive funding from the EAP region.

This project aims to raise public awareness of human rights, motivate private and public organizations to employ persons with disabilities, support businesses and services of the disabled, as well as locate skills and services in demand. Mongolian Association of State Alumni (MASA) will develop a national employment and demographics database of physically challenged people in Mongolia; establish a web based social map, which will facilitate greater communication within the community as well as future employers; train non-profits to keep the database and web based social map up to date; and organize "Job Fair for Disabled" in July 2012.

At the State Alumni and the Embassy, we believe that the united strength of the State alumni network is one of the most dynamic forces for positive change this country possesses. With alumni support projects such as AEIF from the State Alumni and with our local current and future alumni efforts, we hope to find effective ways to gather State alumni members together around particular issues like the environment and around particular fields of endeavor such as promotion of equal opportunities. The association is recruiting partners and volunteers who wish to collaborate on this project and if you are interested in supporting this project, please send an e-mail to masa.mongolia@gmail.com.



**ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT
INNOVATION FUND**

STATE ALUMNI
YOUR GLOBAL COMMUNITY



ETA's at the meeting with the Ambassador

ALUMNI NEWS: Mongolia welcomes its second group of ETA's



*Fulbright ETA's, ETA coordinators
with Ambassador*

On July 30, 2011, five energetic young Americans arrived in Ulaanbaatar to start their one-year stay in Mongolia as Fulbright English Teaching Assistants (ETAs). The Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship program is a U.S. Department of State sponsored exchange program designed to assist with English teaching overseas by sending young American college graduates to different countries and letting them assist with English teaching at universities, schools and vocational centers.

The U.S. Embassy in Mongolia hosted its first ever English Teaching Assistants (ETAs) last year and this year it is delighted to receive the second group of five ETAs.

Their stay in Mongolia started with a month long language, culture and teaching methodology orientation program during which they are learning basic overview of Mongolian culture and language via classroom teaching as well as through home stays with urban and nomadic families. In addition, they are receiving an overview of Mongolian educational system and basic teaching methodology classes. On the first day of their orientation program, the new PAO Allyson Algeo and the Cultural Affairs Assistant Uyanga. A visited the ETAs at their orientation site and had lunch with them. Although it was only the first day of the orientation, our ETAs were quick to impress their Mongolian language teacher who said that "these are the first students who managed to familiarize themselves with the Mongolian alphabet on the first day of the class and were able to read actual words." Our new ETAs are proving themselves quick to adapt to a new culture and place. On the second day of their arrival, one of the ETAs, Philip went out to the Narantuul market place and bought himself a bicycle without knowing a single word in Mongolian. The Embassy is very happy to welcome our new ETAs and continue to assist them in their venture to improve English language teaching at their respective schools. The U.S. Ambassador Mr. Addleton received the new ETAs in his office on August 16 and wished them the best of success as they help with promoting English language teaching in Mongolia which is one of the priority fields of the Embassy's educational programs.

On behalf of the alumni community and the U.S. Embassy, we would like to welcome our ETAs to Mongolia and invite you to take this opportunity not only to teach English, but also use it to promote person-to-person relationships between America and Mongolia and be cultural ambassadors.



*Fulbright ETAs at Mongolian language
class*



ETAs having lunch with PAO



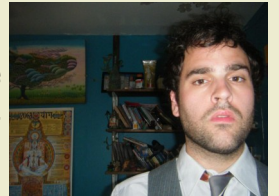
*Mongolian language class with
Ms. Bayasmaa*

2011 ETAs introductions:



Allison was born and raised in Tucson, AZ, a desert town with a climate opposite to that of Mongolia. She attended Scripps College in Claremont, CA and graduated this May with her bachelors degree in biology. Although her academic background is in bio-medical research, her interest in other cultures, and love of horses and the outdoors, led her to Mongolia. She is excited to be teaching English at the Mongolian State University of Agriculture for the coming year.

Cooper Baltis hails from Austin, Texas. He graduated with a degree in history from St. Edward's University *cum laude* and self-published his first novel this year. Through the Fulbright ETA program, he will be teaching at the National University of Mongolia at the School of Mongolian Language and Culture. While in Mongolia he hopes to finish two novels and explore the countryside extensively.



Anja Hughes-Stinson is a recent graduate of Pitzer College, a small liberal arts college in Claremont, California. There she double majored in Psychology and Fine Art. This year, she will be teaching English at the Ghandi School of Art and Production. Horseback riding and instructing children how to ride consume a great deal of her time when she is at home in Southern California. She hopes to learn more about and also experience Mongolia's uniquely preserved horse culture during her year in the country.

Having just graduated from Olin College (near Boston) with a Robotics Engineering degree, Philip Chung is off on a year-long adventure teaching English at the Mongolian University of Science and Technology before starting his career. He likes to get involved in local communities wherever he goes, and requests that you e-mail him with volunteer opportunities related to health, agriculture, education, or engineering at philip.chung.olin@gmail.com. He likes touring countries by bicycle and will bike across Mongolia if given the opportunity.



Holly Bouma-Johnston is from Grayslake, Illinois (near Chicago). She graduated from Coe College in May 2011 with a B.A. in psychology and a B.A. in music. She was interested in coming to Mongolia because of the unique traditional music and plans to take lessons on the Morin Khuur. She is looking forward to teaching English at the College of Music and Dance.

ALUMNI NEWS



MASA Alumni Association Raises \$15,000 to Promote Program for the Disabled

The Mongolian Association of State Alumni (MASA) organized a highly successful fundraising event on May 13, 2011 – raising \$15,000 to support a summer program of "TRY Asia in Mongolia."

TRY Asia is an international event that promotes social awareness and acceptance of disabled people. This annual program has previously taken place in seven different Asian countries, and this year was hosted in Mongolia by The Universal Development Independent Living Center for Disabled, an NGO headed by Mr. Undrakhbayar, an alumnus of a U.S. State Department Voluntary Visitor Program in 2010. The event hosted 76 people from seven Asian countries including Mongolia, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Cambodia, Nepal, Pakistan (38 disabled participants and 38 volunteer assistants). The group traveled around Mongolia for a total of 10 days during which they traveled on public transportation and visited schools, businesses, government agencies and public institutions to raise awareness of disability issues. They also gave public presentations to promote realistic and positive understanding of people with disabilities and their rights, skills, talents and desire to contribute to society.

As a USG alumni, Mr. Undrakhbayar, approached MASA to request their support and collaboration for TRY Asia in Mongolia. In particular, they needed funds for the food, transportation and other needs of the participants. The program fit perfectly with MASA's long term goal to promote "equal opportunities for everyone" in Mongolia and help to create an inclusive and open society in their country. Considering TRY Asia in Mongolia to be a very important and potentially effective awareness raising program, MASA members were happy to collaborate on this worthy initiative from a fellow alumnus.

In just three weeks, the members of MASA's Board of Directors organized an evening social event, raising a total of \$15,000 to support TRY Asia and Undrakhbayar's NGO. Held at Khan Bank Auditorium, which donated the space, the event included food and entertainment – including performers who are also USG alumni. Some of the total funds raised came from the ticket price for the event, but the bulk of the support was donated by private companies at the request of MASA members: XAS Bank donated \$4,000, Tenger Financial Group donated \$1,600, Tenger Insurance donated \$1,600, Cosmo Group donated \$4,000, and Seoul Restaurant donated \$1,600. In addition over 20 donated art pieces (paintings and sculptures) were auctioned during the event, raising nearly \$2,000.

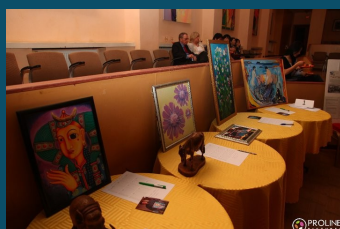
Mr. Jargalsaikhan, President of MASA, noted during his speech that "real development comes only when everyone has an opportunity to participate. Physical and conceptual barriers should be fought in order to ensure diversity and democracy in our society. And we as Mongolian U.S. alumni should be the one of the first to raise this issue and take a step."



MASA President
Mr. Jargalsaikhan
opening the event



MASA Board member
Ms. Oyungerel



Paintings for the silent Auction



Board members and alumni
bidding for the paintings



2010 VolVis program alumnus
Mr. Undrakhbayar, 2010 VolVis
alumna Ms. Enkhtuya with their
colleague Mr. Avirmed



Volunteers from the Universal
Development Center selling Try-
2011 t-shirts with a Japanese
volunteer



Vice President of MASA
Ms. Gantuya at the opening



U.S. Ambassador Jonathan
Addleton gives speech at Try
Asia opening ceremony



Try Asia opening event at Sukhbaatar Square



Try Asia participants



Try Asia 2011 participants during the opening of the program

TRY Asia in Mongolia took place from June 26 to July 05, 2011. MASA continued to collaborate and assist the Universal Development NGO throughout the implementation of the event and helped to promote it through its contacts. On June 26, 2011, the Try opening took place on the Sukhbaatar Square and the representatives of MASA, the sponsor organizations, parents and families of the participants and other supporters came to see the group off on their 10 day travel. U.S. Ambassador Mr. Jonathan Addleton and his wife Mrs. Fiona Addleton were present at the event and the Ambassador gave a speech wishing all the travelers a safe and successful journey.

The 76 participants of the Try event divided into three teams and took off from the Sukhbaatar square on the first ever disability awareness raising international tour to Darkhan-Erdenet cities, Baganuur-Nalaikh-Tuv province and Ulaanbaatar. For many parents and participants this was the first occasion to be separated and although happy to see their children interacting and enthusiastically working for the trip, many parents could not help worrying for their children to stay away from them for so long.

During their trips, the three groups held meetings with 17 local government organizations (welfare and employment departments, public transportation departments and local health care providers and hospitals) five NGOs for local people with disabilities in each city/place, and gave live interviews on local TVs and radio stations and presentations for public in each place they visited. They also gave out 10,000 hand-outs about "independent life style" and on infrastructural standards for people with disabilities.

On July 5, 2011, the Try groups returned back to Ulaanbaatar from their trips and assembled on the Freedom Square to hold the closing of the Try event.

The leader of the Try event Mr. Undrakhbayar said at the closing that "this trip was a challenge, but a challenge that made us happy. Because it gave us an opportunity to test the strength of our determination." He said that this was an invaluable experience for all of them because it gave the participating youth an opportunity to learn to appreciate their own strength and role in improving their own lives and the public and the government an opportunity to see the people with disabilities not just as "recipients" of assistance, but as important stakeholders and "contributors" to their own development and happiness. The participants said that their main problem during the trip was breaking the wheelchairs. Many wheelchairs were broken among the three teams, but the most number of wheelchairs broke in Ulaanbaatar. The participants said that "this is why it was important to organize such events as Try. We cannot go out of our homes without breaking our wheelchairs."

Try team on the main street in Darkhan city



Try team on Erdenet train station

Try team at Morin khuur monument in Darkhan



Try team visiting the "Erdenet" mining corporation



During a live interview at an Erdenet local TV



Try team on a hill in Erdenet

ALUMNI NEWS: Fulbright Orientation 2011



2011 Government of Mongolia funded Fulbright grantees with Ambassador Addleton, former PAO Marissa Maurer and Cultural Assistant Uyanga A.

The U.S. embassy in Ulaanbaatar organized the pre-departure orientation for the 2011 new Mongolian Fulbright grantees on Wednesday, June 23, 2011 in conjunction with the Mongolian Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. The event was opened by Mongolian Minister of Education, Culture and Science Mr. Otgonbayar who noted that what Mongolia needs most is open-minded, internationally competent, and caring professionals and said to the grantees that the Ministry and the Government of Mongolia will be looking forward to welcoming them back upon the completion of their studies in America and seeing them contributing to Mongolia's development. U.S. Ambassador Jonathan Addleton and the former Public Affairs Officer (PAO) Ms. Marissa Maurer took part in the event and the Ambassador congratulated the new Fulbrighters and wished them the best of success as they pursue their studies in America. This year marks the first Mongolia and America joint Fulbright program. Upon the 16th anniversary of the start of the

Fulbright program in Mongolia, the government of Mongolia signed a contract with the Fulbright Foundation to sponsor 10 Mongolians to study in the U.S. on the Fulbright program in the year of 2011. Thus, this year, with the contribution of the Mongolian government, total of 16 Mongolians are granted the prestigious Fulbright scholarship and are leaving to the U.S. to pursue masters degrees.

Additionally, Ms. Ariuntsatsral and Ms. Uurtsaikh were invited to the event to share their experiences as former Fulbrighters to assist the new grantees in adapting to the new academic and social environment in the U.S. once they embark on a journey in a country widely known as "the land of freedom and opportunity."

The event held a very pleasant surprise. After presenting the grant certificates to the new Fulbrighters, Mr. Otgonbayar announced that the Government of Mongolia is awarding a state honor of "Outstanding Cultural Contribution" to the PAO Marissa Maurer for her work and contribution to advance cultural and educational programs between the two countries during her three years of service in Mongolia. Marissa, after working as a PAO at the U.S. Embassy for three years, 2008-2011, left Mongolia to continue her work with the State Department in Washington D.C and the Embassy and the Public Affairs Section is delighted to welcome its new Public Affairs Officer Ms. Allyson Algeo.



Ambassador, former PAO and MECS opening the Press event

Yo. Otgonbayar, Minister of Education, Culture and Science handing certificates to Fulbright students



Fulbright students at the event

Fulbright Pre-departure briefing, Fulbright alumni Ariuntsatsral and Uurtsaikh with Alumni Coordinator and Cultural Assistant



Fulbright Department of State students at the briefing, at Embassy

ALUMNI NEWS: UGRAD Pre-departure 2011



Former PAO and Alumni Coordinator meeting with Ugraders

On July first, 2011, the Public Affairs' Section of the U.S. Embassy organized a meeting with the 2010 returning UGRADs and the 2011 new Ugraders. This was a "welcome" meeting for our returnees and a pre-departure for our new Ugraders. The purpose of this meeting was to connect our returning participants with the new participants of the program and help them share information. The meeting gave us the embassy a chance to welcome back the returning Ugrad participants and hear about their thoughts and experiences of participating in the Ugrad program as well as an opportunity to inform them about the various activities and opportunities that they as alumni of the Ugrad program can take part and continue their exchange experience as alumni. The participants of the previous year shared their

experiences and gave much practical advice on how to cope and succeed with their courses while enjoying the many cultural and recreational activities and taking full advantage of the varied opportunities the program offers. The Embassy's Public Affairs Officer at the time, Marissa Maurer, attended the meeting and congratulated the students on their successful admission to the program and wished them the best of success in their studies in the U.S. The Alumni Coordinator Uyanga Erdenebold talked to the returning Ugraders about the advantages of being alumni and explained about The State Alumni global network and resources, the Mongolian alumni association and the Embassy's alumni programs. The alumni were particularly interested in the internship opportunities at the Embassy. The Executive Director of MASA Ms. Munguntuya, a 2008 Ugrad alumna herself, came to the meeting and told the new alumni about the activities the association organizes and the projects it is implementing. Many of the new alumni signed up to volunteer for various upcoming events of the association. The 2010 Ugrad Batbayar gave a presentation on general intro-

duction to the Global Undergraduate program and shared some of his videos of the Ugrad enrichment gatherings. The new Ugraders were full of questions and curiosity and the participants from the previous year such as Dulguun were more than happy to answer all their questions and give advice on academic life in the U.S. colleges: grading system, choosing, registering for and enrolling in courses, adjusting to and taking part in a busy, interesting and demanding campus life, participating in community service activities and doing internships. The alumni and the new students chatted and shared contact information while enjoying pizzas and soft drinks. Both the alumni and the new students were very grateful for the opportunity for sharing experiences and information and meeting with one another.



Global Ugrad Alumni Dulguun sharing experience



Global Ugrad alumni Batbayar giving presentation



New Ugraders meet Ugrad Alumni

ALUMNI NEWS: Alumni Association Happy Hour

On Friday of June 17, 2011, MASA (Mongolian Association of State Alumni) and the Public Affairs section of the U.S. Embassy co-organized a Happy Hour fundraising party to support MASA and its activities for promoting disability awareness.

MASA, also called "Ambassadors for Development," was created in September 2007 as an association that represents alumni who participated in US Government scholarship and exchange programs. From the time of its formation, MASA has been active in advocating for disability awareness and "equal opportunities for everyone." The purpose of the Happy Hour was to advocate for MASA activities to the Embassy community and the alumni in general and fund-raise for the association. Happy hour took place at the Star Community Center and the event welcomed about 80 people. Guests enjoyed good music, food and drinks while participating in an art auction. In order to support the alumni association, Embassy staff also donated items for auction. Over \$700 was raised by the proceedings from this auction and the alumni association would like to thank all the embassy staff who donated items for this auc-

tion and would like to send a special thanks to Mrs. Fiona Addleton who made a delicious carrot cake, Mr. Nicholas Hill (former DCM) whose donation of a Serbian picture fetched \$150 and Ms. Eve Peters whose donated items brought over \$250 for the association.

Among the crowd there were members of The Universal Development Independent Living Center for Disabled, the NGO who organized the TRY Asia in Mongolia, an international disability awareness tour that MASA helped to fund. Mr. Undrakhbayar, the director of the Universal Development center gave a talk about his organization and the event "Try Asia" which took place in Mongolia for 10 days from June 26th to July 5th.

Professional artists from National Song and Dance Academic Ensemble performed Mongolian Traditional songs to entertain the guests.

During the event, Mr. Jargal-saikhan D, President of MASA, said farewell speech for PAO Marissa Maurer, who was soon leaving Mongolia permanently after three years of service as a Public Affairs Officer. At the end of the event, MASA gladly announced that the event had raised about \$2000.

Alumni coordinator Uyanga. E giving speech



MASA board member Ms. Oyungerel giving speech at Happy Hour

Executive director of MASA, Munguntuya with representatives from the Wheelchaired People's Association



PAO Marissa receiving Try t-shirt from Mr. Undrakhbayar



Guests bidding at the Art auction



During the auction



Guests bidding at the Art auction



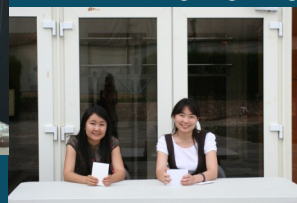
Mrs. Fiona Addleton with Ms. Enkh TUYA



UGRAD alumni Enkhbayar and Dulguun greeting guests



UGRAD grantee Tugsjargal and Alumni intern Namuun selling food and drinks



ECA Special Assistant on Academic Programs meets with Access Alumni



Access alumni meeting

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On August 9, 2011, 17 Access alumni gathered at the American Corner to meet with Ms. Lana Muck, ECA Special Assistant on Academic Programs.

The alumni shared their experience of participating in the Access program and expressed their thanks to the State Department and the Office of Academic Exchanges for giving them “this wonderful opportunity.”

They said that the Access program is not just an English class, but is “a place to form friendship and discover your strengths.” They said that after two years together, their Access friends and teachers feel like a family: “even closer than our friends at school with whom we have been studying for eight or nine years.” They talked about their classes and how their English have improved “when I started I could not even introduce myself in English, but now I’m reading Jane Austin. It is the simplified Macmillan version, but, it is a big improvement for me and I’m very proud,” said one of the Access alumni. The students talked about the fun activities they did as part of

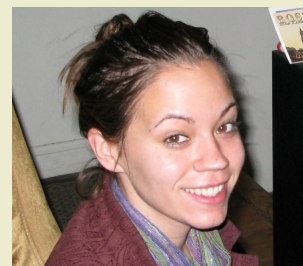
their Access program: celebrating Thanks Giving, Halloween and Christmas with their American teachers and organizing a talent show and writing and performing plays in English and their experience of holding a digital video conferencing with other Access students in Thailand and Vietnam. But, they said Access is not always having fun, it is studying hard. “We always had so much homework.” But, they said “if you really want to learn, it is worth it. Plus, we often did our homework together which helped us to learn from each other.” They said that Access program opens so many doors in front of them and help them to realize their own strengths and potentials and help them to learn to believe in themselves. Many of them said that their biggest goal now is to get a scholarship and study in America which before Access was a dream never to be realized. They expressed an eager interest to be involved in Embassy alumni activities and a desire to be connected to future Access students and form an Access network.

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UB Winter Brings Fulbrighters: Air Pollution Studies in Ulaanbaatar

The Mongolian winter is far and widely known as one of the fiercest in the world and often tops the list of deterring factors that drive people from Mongolia. However, many will be surprised to learn that it was the winter and the winter of Ulaanbaatar in particular that drove one of our American Fulbright researchers to Mongolia.

Atmospheric scientist Dr. Christa Hasenkopf has been studying air pollution in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, since March 2011 through the U.S. Department of State Fulbright program. She is a research associate with the Cooperative Institute of Research in the Environmental Sciences at the University of Colorado. She can be contacted at: Christa.Hasenkopf@colorado.edu.



Atmospheric Scientist
Dr. Christa Hasenkopf



Hazy wintertime skies in UB. Photo courtesy:
Dr. Dennis Ojima.



Gerelmaa G., a Masters student at NUM, is affixing an inlet for an aethalometer, an instrument that measured black carbon (e.g. soot).



NUM senior Nyamdulam G., on a hike in south UB. She and Christa are doing regular hikes up to the top of the mountains in order to chronicle via pictures how the UB skyline will be clouded by a gray haze of pollution as fall and winter approach.

Although Mongolia is known as the Land of Blue Sky, what brought Christa here was quite the opposite. Two years ago, she met with Dr. Dennis Ojima, of Colorado State University, to discuss his research on climate change in Mongolia. During the conversation, Dr. Ojima happened to show her a picture taken from his hotel room window, while visiting Ulaanbaatar in the winter several years ago. Stunned by such sooty skies, Christa went to Web of Science, the largest online database of refereed science publications in the world, to find out more. To her dismay, there was practically nothing on air pollution in Ulaanbaatar in the peer-reviewed literature.

After scavenging the web for organizational reports by the World Health Organization (WHO), The Asian Development Bank, and The World Bank, Christa learned the severity of the pollution situation in UB. "The particulate matter concentrations (PM, or amount of solid stuff suspended in the air) is off the charts. PM10 (particulate matter that is 10 microns or smaller - basically material that is so small it can cause respiratory and other health problems) yearly average concentrations in UB are some of the worst in the world. In fact, Ulaanbaatar's annual average PM10 concentrations are greater than twelve times the WHO air quality guidelines. The problem reaches a crescendo in the wintertime, when ger stoves and power plants must work overtime to heat the city's residences. This pollution has a drastic impact on the city's health. Just recently, a paper was published by researchers at Simon Fraser University in Canada and colleagues at various organizations in Mongolia that estimates that one in ten deaths in UB is associated with air pollution. That is absolutely staggering and absolutely unacceptable."

Fast-forward to August 2011, Christa's fourth month on the Fulbright. So far she and her collaborators in the Lodoysamba Air Pollution Group at the National University have set up an instrument measuring black carbon concentrations at an air quality station in eastern UB. "We'll also be collecting samples of particulate matter this winter for chemical analysis at the University of Colorado. This past month, NUM senior Nyamdulam G. has joined our group and is working on this project with me." Fortunately, through funding received from the National Science Foundation International Research Program, Christa will be staying on an extra year. "Hopefully, we'll install more instruments around UB, and we will be able to make a more in depth chemical analysis. The data collected coupled with basic weather data will allow us to better understand the sources of air pollution in UB, hopefully informing local air pollution policy."

Besides learning more about the nature of the pollution in UB, one of Christa's goals is to inform local citizens on the severity of the air pollution problem, as well as perform basic atmospheric science outreach at the secondary school level. "I have been working with a small and fantastic group of university students on developing a few atmospheric science lessons, and the plan is that the university students will deliver them to local high schools this fall." The hope is to create a university club that will live on well past her time as a Fulbrighter here. As for the international, as well as local, community, Christa has been keeping a blog of her project on her institute's webpage. Freshman at NUM, Javkhaa G. has been assisting with translating entries into Mongolian (see <http://cires.colorado.edu/blogs/mongolia/>).

Lastly, Christa thinks it is imperative to make it easier for others interested in studying UB air pollution to find relevant information, whether they are from UB, another part of Mongolia, or somewhere else in the world. To that purpose, she has created UBAirPollution.org. It is a wiki, editable by anyone, that coalesces all of the known data, papers, talks, and upcoming events related to air pollution matters in UB that people are willing to share. Since April 2011, people in at least 14 countries and 31 cities around the world have visited the page more than 3300 times. Christa says "The more people who become aware of the magnitude of the air pollution problem in UB and consequently work to solve it, the sooner winter time UB can return to being a part of the Land of Blue Sky."

100 years 100 women— My IVLP Experience

EXCHANGE

By Ms. Nomingereel Khuyag
Coordinator, Open Academy NGO



*At International Women of
Courage Awards*

Last March I had a wonderful chance to meet and learn from powerful women and men who are dedicating their efforts for supporting women leadership and training emerging women leaders. Women leaders are the key people in grass root NGOs and schools that works with youth, mobilizes volunteers and community resources to help people in need, and government officials, legislators who are working for greater government accountability and civic participation in the U.S. Equally dear to me was the opportunity I was granted to make friends with over ninety dedicated women from all over the world who broadened my perspective of women's issues around the world. This great opportunity was provided to me by the U.S. Department of State's special IVLP Program which aimed at marking the 100th anniversary of international women's day.

One of the highlights of this trip was attending the International women of courage awards ceremony. Hearing the stories and achievement of nine courageous women from various countries who were honored from the Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and seeing them in person was very moving and exciting experience. These women were political activists, educators and lawyers promoting human rights in their countries. As a young woman working for an accountable democracy and rule of law in my country, it was very inspiring for me to see 20 years old Belarusian girl who fights for her country's civil society freedom.

During various meetings and gatherings throughout my trip, one thing I came to appreciate most in the U.S. was the long-standing culture of volunteerism and community spirit that seem to be an integral part of everyday life of ordinary citizens in the US. I was pleasantly surprised to see many innovative and suc-

cessful programs and incentives for especially young people to voluntarily engage in various activities to support their communities. This, in my opinion, is one of the reasons behind America's success and is one of the important things that we as young Mongolians should strive to promote in our country.

These volunteerism programs usually start in secondary schools and they offer opportunities for students to serve for their neighborhoods. The main goal of these programs is to help the youth to understand and feel their role and significance of participation in making changes in their communities in addition to helping them acquire new knowledge and skills through an interaction with various members of their communities.

One innovative way of community engagement I liked and experienced was a thrift shop in Bozeman, Montana where I volunteered. It sells second hand goods, books, house hold items donated by locals in very low price to general public or poor people that has special vouchers giving by the municipal government to obtain goods. The profit made by this shop goes to supporting help center for victims of domestic violence and suicide crisis phone etc. My task was to sort basement full of clothes by sex, size and to hang them. I was told these kinds of tasks at the shop are always done by volunteers. I am happy that I was able to contribute at least two hours of my time for helping this community. This was the least I can do for the American people from whom I was learning a lot. While I was volunteering at the shop, I was wondering why we Mongolians have this odd tradition of not giving one's old clothes to strangers.

Another aspect of the program that I enjoyed very much was meetings with women leaders and visiting organizations who support equality, empowerment and leadership of women and learning about their programs and projects. For instance, we met with UN Women officials, learned about the White House project for women, the Emerge America, Women Building and etc. Among all these visits, I have to mention my visit to the League of Women Voters. I was formerly familiar with it through a film called "Iron Jaw Angels." This film is an inspiring story about suffragist movement and struggles of American women in the beginning of twentieth century to obtain right to vote. When I first entered the League of Women Voters, I realized that I came to the very origin of this movement. Seeing

the pictures of real heroes there was truly inspiring and moving. It was wonderful to see their legacy is still continuing and encouraging many women to be proactive and participatory in our democracy.

Finally, as a citizen of relatively homogeneous society, after visiting 5 cities in this short time, it was fascinating for me to observe the diversity of American people, their culture and way of life. Bison traffic jam in the Yellowstone, farmers with big jeeps in Montana, home hospitality of an adorable couple that lives in the forest near Bozeman, Mamma Mia, sex museum and Guggenheim in New York city, The Senate session launch with Christian Gospel in Sacramento Capitol, wine tasting in Napa Valley; "Mongolian chicken" dish in Chinatown of San Francisco, and me puzzling to answer the first question of a school kid I met in Washington DC which was "How is politics in Mongolia?" were all unforgettable moments of my trip. I will do my best so that my experience of the IVLP program will not stay as just good memories, but go on to be an inspiration for me to continue supporting and promoting women leadership in my country and work to strengthen the future collaborations between Mongolia and America in this field.



At league of Women voters



*Nomingereel together with Asia Pacific
group*

REFLECTION

EXCHANGE REFLECTION: My Humphrey Year



Chinkhand giving presentation at the Broadcast Education Association

My name is Chinkhand Dorj. I was a Humphrey fellow at the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication, ASU (Arizona State University) 2010-2011 and it is my pleasure to share about my experiences with my fellow alumni through this newsletter.

One of the highlights of my year as a Humphrey fellow is that we, 10 fellows from Mongolia, Pakistan, China, Macedonia, Georgia, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Turkey, were the first ever Humphreys at the ASU. ASU is one of the top 100 universities in the world. So I am really proud of becoming one of the first Humphreys at that school.

As a leading journalism and communication college, Walter Cronkite school of Journalism and Mass Communication, ASU, focuses more on multimedia and online media which gave me an opportunity to learn much about blogging, website management, social media tools etc. Another exciting feature of my program was that every Monday we got a chance to meet with American leading journalists and media executives such as Aaron Brown, The former lead anchor for CNN, Leonard Downie Jr, vice president-at-large of The Washington Post. We also had opportunities to visit well-known media outlets and companies. All these experiences gave me an opportunity to get an understanding of the larger picture of the current trends of the world media and see how media environment is changing in the world today. Another highlight of my Humphrey year is my experience of living in the Desert, AZ State. It was the first time I saw so many kinds of cactuses, from the biggest to the smallest. I have never been to such a hot desert before and therefore when I came to Tucson in June, 2010, I was quite sure a winter would be a NO there.

But, I could not have been more wrong. Winter in desert is not only possible, but also gorgeous. I lived in Phoenix AZ with my family and we all enjoyed the winter there. This program not only had an effect on me personally, but also on my family, especially my 2 sons, through me. My 17 and 8 years old sons now both have their own blogs and they always tell me "Mom look how many people are visiting my blog...?"

We all know about the popularity and breadth of the Humphrey program. But, I experienced the true potentials and the popularity of the program when I was attending AIBD conference which was hosted by MNB in Ulaanbaatar after my return to Mongolia. Imagine my surprise when I run into another Humphrey fellow from Nepal of the year 2005 at the conference. As soon as we learned that we were fellow Humphrey alumni, we started to talk so much and so enthusiastically as if we have known each other from a long time ago.

The Humphrey year we spent in Phoenix was one of my and my family's happiest and most memorable year in our life. The Humphrey program brought so many positive changes to me as a person and a professional and helped me to have wider and more creative vision regarding my life and career. I feel like I'm better equipped to deal with whatever that may lay in front of me. Now I'm ready to turn the next page in my life as a professional.

Thank you very much the U.S. State Department, IIE, ASU and U.S. Embassy in Mongolia for giving me such golden opportunity.

Sincerely
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Sonora Desert museum in Tucson, AZ with Humphrey fellows

State Alumni — Your Global Community — <https://alumni.state.gov>

Please join the Global State Alumni Community at <http://alumni.state.gov> where you can: meet and stay in touch with fellow alumni from all over the world; hear about alumni news and activities; learn about job and grant opportunities; access over 1000 academic and prominent journals and periodicals; and share your stories and participate in global discussions. The State Alumni website is an exclusive community network only for the U.S.G alumni to ensure that your exchange experience does not stop when you return home, but continues to result in productive professional, societal, cultural, and community engagements.



AMERICAN CULTURAL AND INFORMATION CENTER

The U.S. Embassy in Ulaanbaatar supports a small American style public library known as the American Cultural and Information Center at the Ulaanbaatar City Public Library. The Center's main goal is improvement of mutual understanding between the people of the United States and Mongolia. Each Center contains reference works, periodicals, and a circulating book collection.

Free on-line reference searching and e-mail access enhance the ability of the Center to provide the most up-to-date information to their patrons. Events at the ACIC for wide audiences give first-hand exposure to American culture, as well as provide opportunities to meet native English speakers and American speakers on various topics. American Centers are often used by USG alumni as venues for their meetings and events.

http://mongolia.usembassy.gov/american_cultural_information_center3.html
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/American-Corner-Ulaanbaatar/162640348874>

“Let’s Talk About America” lecture series

Every Thursday at 4pm the ACIC holds an English lecture for the public on a variety of topics. The speakers usually include U.S. Embassy officers or American citizens who are working in Mongolia. These lectures grant the participants an opportunity to deepen their understanding about the history, culture, art and nature of America and improve their language skills. (Please note that this program runs from September until the end of June with a break in January)

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EDUCATION USA

Educational Advising and Resource Center (EARC) is a member of the global Education USA network of more than 450 advising centers supported by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the US Department of State. The EARC actively works in collaboration with the US Embassy in Mongolia. Moreover, the center disseminates accurate, comprehensive, current, and unbiased information about the US education system and scholarship opportunities to students and individuals who want to study in the United States.

Location: Sukhbaatar district, Student's street, building MKM-24, 1st floor, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

Working Hours: Mon-Friday 09:00-18:00 Contact information: Email: info@earcmn.org

Website: <http://www.earcmn.org/>

U.S. Embassy in Ulaanbaatar



For information regarding general activities and news of the U.S. Embassy including: Key Embassy Officers, Embassy reports and speeches, programs and grants, educational and scholarship opportunities, alumni news and much more Visit: <http://mongolia.usembassy.gov>

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<http://mongolia.usembassy.gov/masa.html>

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